

REMARKS

Claims 3 and 5-11 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2 and 4 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and therefore the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) of the claims as being anticipated by Nagasuka et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,615,364, is rendered moot.

Allowed and Allowable Claims

Claim 3 has been amended to put the claim in independent form to include all of the limitations of cancelled claim 1. Accordingly, claims 3 and 5-11 should now be allowed and the application passed to issue.

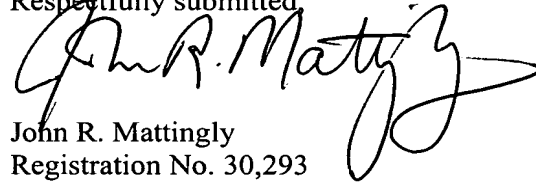
Serial No. 09/915,311
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NIT-285

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants contend that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and reexamination is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Mattingly", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

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